Software tailors resume to job

Written a resume lately? Does the thought strike fear in your heart? A software package called The Resume Kit might help.

Available from Spinnaker Software Corp., (800) 826-0706, the kit lets you easily tailor your resume for every job you apply for, instead of just tailoring your cover letter. It's also well-priced at $43.45, including shipping.

Unless you're a good writer and somewhat of an artist, the task of writing a resume, fitting it onto the page and having it look good can be the ultimate exercise in frustration.

The Resume Kit puts the resume production task well within the frustration threshold.

No more compromises or generalizations sent off to the printer. The Resume Kit lets you write, design and print your resume by yourself.

While there are other programs on the market that help you with resume production, this is the best of that type that I've encountered.

Hillel Segal

Here are some details:

■ The Resume Kit lets you experiment with types of resumes: chronological, skill-based or accomplishment formats. The program gives you colorful, on-screen templates to fill in with the information. The software manual includes lots of examples for you to follow, and gives good tips about resume writing that will make your curriculum vitae clean and focused.

■ After the basic text is written, the program helps you arrange it attractively on the page. You choose the typeface, whether you want your name centered or lined up at the margin, and how you want the body of the resume to appear.

This is the feature I like the best, because it relieves you of the decision of how to present the information and lets you concentrate on the content.

■ The kit works with dot matrix, letter quality or laser printers. As someone who's done some hiring before, I'd advise you to avoid the dot matrix printer for a resume.

■ You can use the package's word processor and mail-merge function to write the cover letters. The manual includes examples of cover letters — and thank you letters, too.

Other features include a spell-checker, a long list of action words — the verbs that make your resume come to life — and a job-hunting guide that includes resume-writing advice and some good interviewing tips.

Now, you might think that this program is just for individuals who are job-hunting, but there's an office application for this business tool, too.

If your company is bidding on projects and including employees' or consultants' resumes in proposals, The Resume Kit is a perfect way to customize their resumes — either in content or style.

I tested the program and found it easy to use. The manual includes a wealth of information for any job hunter. And if your PC has a color screen, you'll really have fun with it.

The bottom line: Is it worth it to spend more than $40 for a computer program to construct a document as basic as a resume? If you're looking for a job, or if your company is using resumes to solicit work, The Resume Kit is worth its price in time and effort saved, not to mention the edge a targeted resume can give by presenting you in the best possible light.

Hillel Segal's column includes evaluations of gadgets, seminars and books designed to enhance business productivity. Segal is a management consultant based in Boulder.